VISIT…

Test 1C: Noticing differences

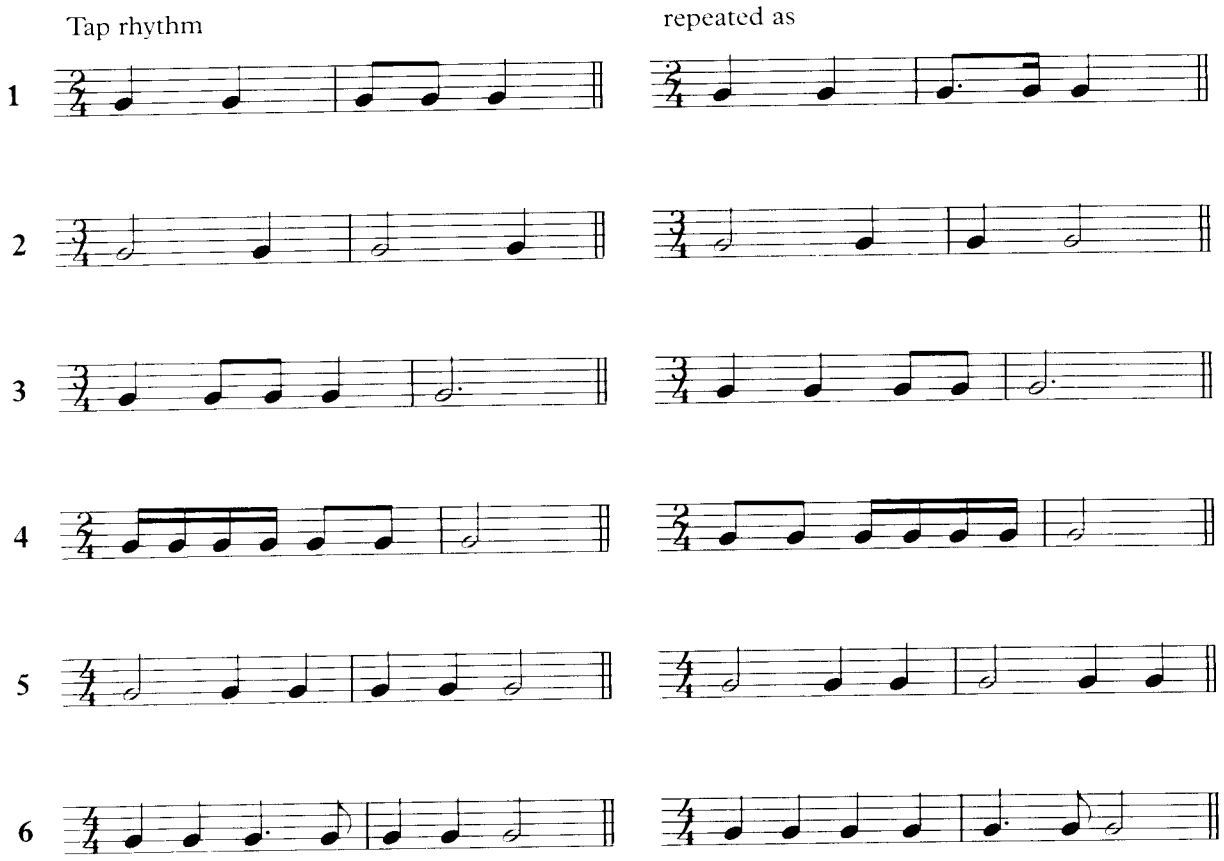
'To recognise a rhythmic change to a two-bar phrase played twice by the examiner, with the change being made in the second playing. Candidates will be required to recognise and tap or describe the change. The pulse will first be indicated. The examiner will be prepared to play both versions of the phrase a second time if necessary.'

Training to notice differences in performances helps musical concentration and develops the critical ear. In similar tests in the Associated Board's Practical Musicianship examinations, the candidate is required to spot differences which occur between what is printed and what is played. That can be an aid to sight reading and pupils becoming more aware of mistakes in their own performances.

In this test the candidate listens for the differences between two melodies played by the examiner. In Grade 1 this is limited to a rhythmic change.

Some preliminary practice will help using a tapped rhythm.

At first the answer might be restricted to tapping the two versions. For example, the pupil might say, 'The first time it went' ♩ ♩ ♩ (tapping the rhythm); 'and the second time it went' ♩. ♪♩ (again tapping the rhythm). Later the pupil should be encouraged to describe the difference, saying, for example, 'The first time the notes were even; the second time there was a dotted rhythm.' Or simply, 'It was uneven,' leading to, 'The first time there were three even crotchets (quarter notes); and the second time the rhythm was dotted crotchet, quaver, crotchet (dotted quarter note, eighth note, quarter note).' In the Associated Board examinations the examiner will play the original phrase once and then the changed version once, after which candidates should respond either by illustration or explanation to show that they have noticed the difference. The examiner will play both phrases again if necessary.



Teachers should improvise further examples for regular practice using the procedure described above.